

# News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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## **REPS. MARKEY, KING, NEAL, AND QUINN PRESS CASE FOR KEEPING GME AND DSH IN MEDICARE**

***2 Massachusetts Democrats and 2 New York Republicans Recruit over 100 Members of  
Congress for Letter to Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare***

**WASHINGTON, DC** – United States Representatives Ed Markey (D-MA), Pete King (R-NY), Richard Neal (D-MA) and Jack Quinn (R-NY) announced today that they have recruited 133 Members of Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to sign a letter to members of the Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare urging Commissioners to recommend maintaining current Medicare policy on funding Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Disproportionate Share (DSH) to ensure that those programs are not subjected to an annual appropriations process. A similar letter, signed by 55 U.S. Senators was recently sent by Sens. Kennedy (D-MA) and Moynihan (D-NY). The text of the letter follows:

Dear Commissioner:

As the Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare considers recommendations to assure the long-term solvency and viability of the Medicare program, one of the most important issues involves Medicare's payments to teaching hospitals for services to Medicare beneficiaries. We understand that the Commission is considering proposals that would put Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Disproportionate Share (DSH) funding under Medicare in jeopardy. These proposals include removing Direct Medical Education (the most substantial part of GME) funding and DSH funding from the Medicare Trust Fund while turning them into domestic discretionary accounts, and changing the formula for Indirect Medical Education (a smaller part of GME) funding.

We urge you to maintain current Medicare policy on funding of GME and DSH. Since two-thirds of DSH funding goes to teaching hospitals, the two programs are closely related.

Teaching hospitals play a vitally important role in the nation's health care delivery system. In addition to the mission of patient care that all hospitals fulfill, teaching hospitals serve as the pre-eminent setting for the clinical education of physicians and other health professionals. Teaching hospitals also provide the environment in which clinical research and health services research can flourish. Because they offer highly specialized health care, teaching hospitals provide care for the most severely ill patients in our society. Access to the highly sophisticated care that teaching hospitals provide is especially important to senior citizens, because of their often complicated health problems. In light of the extra costs associated with fulfilling these missions, teaching hospitals are particularly vulnerable to private payment reductions and managed care. Medicare GME and DSH payments are indispensable for the continuing financial health of the teaching hospitals.

GME and DSH payments are directly related to Medicare services and therefore belong in

the Medicare Trust Fund. They represent Medicare's fair share of the cost of caring for senior citizens in these hospitals. They are just as appropriate an expense under Medicare as the higher Medicare payments made to hospitals in areas with higher wage costs.

In order to remain the world leader in graduate medical education, we must continue to maintain Medicare's strong commitment to the nation's teaching hospitals. We oppose efforts to subject GME and DSH programs to an annual appropriations process which would force them to compete against other important federal priorities which could result in a reduction in the federal commitment and which would shift support that should properly be a Medicare responsibility to general revenues.

We urge you to recommend continuation of the current financing arrangement. As this letter demonstrates, teaching hospitals have broad support in the House. Most states have major medical centers, and the vast majority of Americans recognize their importance. A drastic restructuring of the GME and DSH payments under Medicare would create an unnecessary controversy that could undermine any consensus the Commission achieves in other areas. We hope that you will join us in protecting Medicare's critical role in the funding of GME and DSH.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

The 133 members signing the letter were: Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Peter T. King (R-NY), Richard E. Neal (D-MA), Jack Quinn (R-NY), Benjamin A. Gilman (R-NY), David E. Bonior (D-MI), J. Joseph Moakley (D-MA), Jennifer Dunn (R-WA), Charles B. Rangel (D-NY), George W. Gekas (R-PA), Henry A. Waxman (D-CA), Don Young (R-AK), Martin Frost (D-TX), Gene Green (D-TX), James A. Traficant, Jr. (D-OH), John J. LaFalce (D-NY), Major R. Owens (D-NY), James T. Walsh (R-NY), Marty Meehan (D-MA), Barney Frank (D-MA), Nick J. Rahall, II (D-WV), John P. Murtha (D-PA), Sam Gejdenson (D-CT), Sander M. Levin (D-MI), Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), Bob Filner (D-CA), Norman D. Dicks (D-WA), Howard L. Berman (D-CA), Jerry F. Costello (D-IL), William L. Clay (D-MO), Louise McIntosh Slaughter (D-NY), Peter A. DeFazio (D-OR), Michael R. McNulty (D-NY), Diana DeGette (D-CO), Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), John M. McHugh (R-NY), Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), Corrine Brown (D-FL), Michael E. Capuano (D-MA), John W. Olver (D-MA), Chaka Fattah (D-PA), James H. Maloney (D-CT), Darlene Hooley (D-OR), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), John Elias Baldacci (D-ME), Lois Capps (D-CA), Brian Baird (D-WA), Tim Holden (D-PA), Rush D. Holt (D-NJ), William D. Delahunt (D-MA), Bob Etheridge (D-NC), Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Melvin L. Watt (D-NC), Bob Weygand (D-RI), Calvin M. Dooley (D-CA), Jim McGovern (D-MA), Thomas H. Allen (D-ME), Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Ken Bentsen (D-TX), Heather Wilson (R-NM), Frank Mascara (D-PA), Patrick J. Kennedy (D-RI), Janice D. Schakowsky (D-IL), Ted Strickland (D-OH), Robert A. Brady (D-PA), Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA), Michael F. Doyle (D-PA), Rosa L. DeLauro (D-CT), Jim Turner (D-TX), Silvestre Reyes (D-TX), Lynn C. Woolsey (D-CA), Albert R. Wynn (D-MD), John E. Sweeney (R-NY), Carrie P. Meek (D-FL), Spencer Bachus (R-AL), Anthony D. Weiner (D-NY), Carolyn C. Kilpatrick (D-MI), Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), Bob Franks (R-NJ), Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO), Michael P. Forbes (R-NY), David E. Price (D-NC), James A. Leach (R-IA), Jim Gibbons (R-NV), Harold E. Ford, Jr. (D-TN), John Lewis (D-GA), John E. Peterson (R-PA), Thomas M. Reynolds (R-NY), Mark Foley (R-FL), Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Marge Roukema (R-NJ), Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ), Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY), Rick Hill (R-MT), Steven R. Rothman (D-NJ), Mike McIntyre (D-NC),

Jack Metcalf (R-WA), Joseph Crowley (D-NY), Virgil H. Goode, Jr. (D-VA), Gary L. Ackerman (D-NY), Sherwood L. Boehlert (R-NY), Nydia M. Velazquez (D-NY), Edolphus Towns (D-NY), Pat Danner (D-MO), Robert A. Boski (D-PA), Jose Serrano (D-NY), Nita M. Lowey (D-NY), Robert E. Andrews (D-NJ), Eliot L. Engel (D-NY), Frank A. LoBiondo (R-NJ), Mike Thompson (D-CA), Adam Smith (D-WA), Allen Boyd (D-FL), Karen L. Thurman (D-FL), Donald M. Payne (D-NJ), Bobby L. Rush (D-IL), William J. Coyne (D-PA), Bob Clement (D-TN), Ron Klink (D-PA), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Jay Inslee (D-WA), Charles A. Gonzalez (D-TX), Elijah E. Cummings (D-MD), Chet Edwards (D-TX), Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), John S. Tanner (D-TN), Sue W. Kelly (R-NY), George R. Nethercutt, Jr. (R-WA), Curt Weldon (R-PA), Gerald D. Kleczka (D-WI).

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